United Nations A/C.2/61/SR.33

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
10 January 2007

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 33rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 6 December 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Intelmann. . . . . (Estonia)

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Agenda item 57: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (*continued*)

Agenda item 59: Training and research (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 51: Macroeconomic policy questions (*continued*)

(c) External debt crisis and development (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L. 6 and L.54)

Draft resolution on the external debt crisis and development

1. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.54, which was being submitted by Ms. Gomes (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.6. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Ms. Gomes** (Portugal), Rapporteur, said that, in the first preambular paragraph, the words "external debt crisis and development" should have initial capital letters. In the ninth preambular paragraph, the words "*Welcoming also*" should be replaced by "*Further welcoming*" and the words "Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative" should refer to the following footnote: "Debt relief under the two initiatives is expected to reduce the debt stocks of the 29 HIPCs that have reached the decision point by almost 90 per cent. 'Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) — Status of Implementation' prepared by the staffs of IDA and IMF August 2006." In paragraph 8, the word "are" should be replaced by "be".

3. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.54, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

4. **Mr. Gass** (Switzerland), speaking in explanation of position, said that, although his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, it had two reservations regarding the title. First, the overall situation and the content of the resolution itself did not warrant the use of the word "crisis". Secondly, any analysis of the impact of a country's debt situation on its development should take into account internal as well as external debt.

5. Finally, while debt reduction initiatives could contribute to making debt levels more sustainable, the goal of such initiatives was not to cancel 100 per cent of debt. Such a measure would only make it more difficult to find balanced long-term solutions to unsustainable debt.

6. **Mr. Rosengren** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Moldova and Ukraine, said that, although the draft resolution contained many positive provisions, the European Union had had difficulty with the use of the word "crisis" in the title. It also had concerns regarding the phrase "cancellation of 100 per cent of the official multilateral and bilateral debt of heavily indebted poor countries" in paragraph 12. The European Union had reluctantly accepted the paragraph because it contained agreed language from General Assembly resolution 60/265 on the follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit. The ultimate goal of debt relief was to reduce debt burdens to sustainable levels and the reference to cancellation of 100 per cent of the debt of heavily indebted poor countries was not in line with the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

7. **Mr. Mally** (United States of America) said that his delegation had been pleased to join the consensus on the draft resolution, although it had hoped to also reach consensus on omitting the word "crisis" from the title. By retaining the title "external debt crisis", the text did not recognize the fact that the debt position of developing countries had improved significantly and that the HIPC Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, as well as reforms and economic growth, had eased the crisis situation. When the General Assembly repeated language used the previous year to call for consideration of additional measures, it seemed to be either unaware of or ungrateful for the measures that were already in place, including bilateral efforts. It was to be hoped that, at the sixty-second session, the Committee would adopt a text more relevant to the actual situation existing at the time.

8. Finally, in paragraph 12, the word "eligible" should have been inserted in front of "heavily indebted poor countries". In that respect, eligibility requirements were carefully negotiated to ensure that heavily indebted poor countries avoided further unsustainable borrowing and followed other good fiscal management policies.

9. **Mr. Fautua** (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of the CANZ group of countries (Australia, Canada and New Zealand), said that the draft resolution articulated

the effort made to help heavily indebted poor countries to improve their unsustainable debt positions. However, throughout the negotiations, the CANZ group had voiced concern regarding the phrase "cancellation of 100 per cent of the multilateral and bilateral debt" in paragraph 12. In a spirit of compromise, it had accepted the facilitator's proposal to use the language of General Assembly resolution 60/265. However, that language did not reflect the reality of the HIPC Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. Neither initiative ensured 100 per cent cancellation and it should be understood that creditors were not mandated to provide such relief.

10. The group also noted that the word "crisis" in the title did not reflect the reality of the current debt situation or the scope of the draft resolution.

11. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, stressed that many heavily indebted poor countries were indeed still experiencing a debt crisis. The title would be retained until all developing countries had achieved full debt sustainability.

12. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.6 was withdrawn.*

(d) Commodities (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.7 and L.56)

Draft resolution on commodities

13. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.56, which was being submitted by Ms. Gomes (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.7. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

14. **Ms. Gomes** (Portugal), Rapporteur, said that the word "Declaration" in the fifth preambular paragraph should be replaced by the word "outcome". In line 2 of paragraph 12, a comma should be added after "organizations" and the words "and developed countries" should be replaced by the words "by developed countries". The word "also" should be inserted before the word "encourages". In paragraph 20, the phrase "international task force on commodities" should have initial capital letters.

15. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.56, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

16. **Mr. Mally** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation reaffirmed its commitment to the Doha Development Agenda. However, formal resumption of the Doha Round negotiations required Member States to move beyond their current positions, especially in the core negotiations on agriculture, industrial goods and services. The goal of future negotiations was to open markets and achieve further trade liberalization, while recognizing the institutional needs of the developing countries as they integrated into regional and multilateral trade regimes.

17. **Mr. Yun** Kang-hyeon (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation was pleased that a consensus had been reached and that confidence in trade resolutions had been restored.

18. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.7 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.21/Rev.1)

Draft resolution on the International Year of Forests, 2011

19. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.21/Rev.1, which was being submitted by Croatia on behalf of the sponsors listed in the document. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

20. **Ms. Zubčević** (Croatia) said that 2011 should be a year for strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue and policy and programme coordination and promoting public participation.

21. Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bolivia, Burundi, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, the Gambia, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Republic

of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe wished to join the list of sponsors.

22. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.21/Rev.1 was adopted.*

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.25 and L.58)

Draft resolution on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

23. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.58, which was being submitted by Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.25.

24. **Ms. Pliner** (Secretary of the Committee) read out the statement of programme budget implications arising from draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.58, which was also being circulated to the members of the Committee at the meeting.

25. By paragraph 21 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to allocate adequate financial and administrative resources, within existing resources, for the activities and effective functioning of the Inter-Agency Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/219, had established the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Inter-Agency Task Force for Natural Disaster Reduction as successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The Secretariat for the Strategy and its activities were exclusively financed from extrabudgetary resources. Therefore, if the General Assembly adopted draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.58, there would be no financial implications for the regular budget.

26. In section VI of resolution 45/248 B, the Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, and reaffirmed also the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

27. **Mr. Fonseca** (Brazil), Vice-Chairperson, said that the text reflected the consensus reached during the informal consultations. He recommended that it should be adopted by consensus.

28. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.58 was adopted.*

29. **Mr. Mansour** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution. However, it was of the opinion that highlighting certain categories of natural disasters would be a deviation from the provisions of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution clearly stressed "the need to address risk reduction of and vulnerabilities to all natural hazards, including geological and hydro-meteorological hazards, in a comprehensive manner". It was to be hoped that the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction would take note of the language used in the draft resolution and that the Secretary-General's next report would address all types of natural hazards and disasters in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

30. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.25 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 54: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.17 and L.57)

Draft resolution on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

31. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.57, which was being submitted by Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.17. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

32. **Mr. Fonseca** (Brazil), Vice-Chairperson, recommended the draft resolution to the Committee and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

33. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.57 was adopted.*

34. **Ms. Toro** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that

the European Union had been pleased to join the consensus, which had been reached with the understanding that the UN-Habitat Governing Council was the decision-making body of the organization and that the draft resolution in question would not prejudge the decisions taken by it.

35. Paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.57 should not be interpreted as a directive to the Governing Council and therefore did not limit the prerogative of the Council to set its own agenda or to consider the various agenda items as it deemed appropriate.

36. In addition, she drew attention to the fact that paragraphs 1 and 3 of draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.17 had been moved to the preambular part of draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.57 to highlight the fact that the General Assembly had not taken a stand on the documents mentioned in those paragraphs.

37. The European Union looked forward to the six-year medium-term strategic and institutional plan of UN-Habitat and emphasized the crucial role that UN-Habitat could play in the rapid urbanization taking place, especially in developing countries.

38. **Mr. Wood** (Canada) said that he fully supported the Finnish representative's statement.

39. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.17 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 55: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)

(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.20 and L.53)

Draft resolution on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption

40. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.53, which was being submitted by Mr. Barry (Senegal), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.20. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

41. **Mr. Barry** (Senegal), Vice-Chairperson, recommended the draft resolution to the Committee and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

42. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.53 was adopted.*

43. **Ms. Ollus** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that priority should be given to combating corruption and to the ratification, accession and full implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption by all Member States. The draft resolution would send a strong message with respect to those objectives. In addition, the Conference of the States Parties, to be held in Jordan from 10 to 14 December 2006, would contribute significantly to international efforts to fight corruption.

44. Unfortunately, the title of the resolution did not clearly reflect the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, particularly chapter V on asset recovery. The European Union also had reservations about the nature, scope and necessity of the report requested of the Secretary-General in paragraph 4, as the resources used to produce such a report could be more effectively employed to provide practical anti-corruption assistance to Member States. For that reason and in order to avoid duplication, when compiling his report for the sixty-second session, the Secretary-General should take full advantage of the information gathered during and as an outcome of the first Conference of States Parties to the Convention against Corruption.

45. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, reiterated the importance of combating corruption for those countries and said that the Group of 77 would prepare a comprehensive resolution on the issue for the sixty-second session.

46. **Mr. Wood** (Canada), **Ms. Kirkpatrick** (United States of America) and **Mr. Shimada** (Japan) associated themselves with the Finnish representative's statement.

47. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.20 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 56: Groups of countries in special situations (*continued*)

(a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.37 and L.64)

Draft resolution on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

48. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.64, which was being submitted by Mr. Atiyanto (Indonesia), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.37. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

49. **Mr. Abidin** (Malaysia) proposed that several words should be written with initial capital letters: in the eighth preambular paragraph, "ministerial declaration"; in paragraph 9, "poverty reduction strategy papers"; and in paragraphs 11 and 12, "resident coordinator". He expressed appreciation to all delegations for their flexibility in the negotiations, which would hopefully enable the Committee to adopt the resolution by consensus.

50. **Mr. Atiyanto** (Indonesia), Vice-Chairperson, recommended the draft resolution to the Committee and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

51. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.64, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

52. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.37 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 57: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.39 and L.63)

Draft resolution on the role of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty

53. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.63, which was being submitted by Mr. Atiyanto (Indonesia), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.39. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

54. **Ms. Mills** (Jamaica) proposed several corrections to the text: in the second preambular paragraph, the phrase "in particular for the poor", should come before the words "including microfinance and microcredit"; in the sixth preambular paragraph, the words "in particular" should be deleted and the word "especially" should be inserted between the words "have" and "benefited"; and in paragraph 5, the comma following the word "microcredit" should be deleted.

55. **Mr. Atiyanto** (Indonesia) Vice-Chairperson, recommended the draft resolution to the Committee and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

56. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.63, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

57. **Ms. Fernandez** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Liechtenstein, Moldova and Ukraine, said that microfinance was a very important tool in alleviating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The European Union welcomed the increased attention that the granting of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize to Professor Yunus and the Grameen Bank had given to microfinance throughout the world.

58. The European Union had actively participated in the International Year of Microcredit 2005, one of the benefits of which had been that early discussions based on microcredit had evolved into discussions on microfinance, which comprised a broad range of financial products and services for the poor and for micro and small businesses. It fully supported the activities of the United Nations Advisers Group on Inclusive Financial Sectors. It was commendable that the term "inclusive financial sectors" had been used together with the phrase "microfinance, including microcredit". That was an appropriate development, which should have been reflected in the title of the draft resolution.

59. **Ms. Ruder** (Switzerland) said that she supported the Finnish representative's statement, believing that microfinance tools were crucial to alleviating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. While Switzerland welcomed the draft resolution, it was disappointed that the language did not sufficiently reflect recent developments in microfinance.

60. **Mr. Wood** (Canada) said that his delegation had been pleased to join the consensus on the draft resolution, believing that microfinance was an effective and powerful tool for alleviating poverty and reducing the vulnerability of the poor, which in turn enabled them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals sustainably, on their own terms.

61. Canada had participated actively in the United Nations International Year of Microcredit 2005; it had also hosted the Global Microcredit Summit 2006, which highlighted Canada's commitment to microfinance as a tool for development.

62. Microfinance had evolved rapidly in the previous decade by becoming more responsive to low-income individuals' diverse needs for financial products. Canada therefore supported the vision of building inclusive financial sectors for development.

63. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.39 was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 59: Training and research (*continued*)

(a) United Nations University (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.36/Rev.1)

Draft resolution on the United Nations University

64. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.36/Rev.1, which was being submitted by Mr. Kodera (Japan). The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

65. **Mr. Kodera** (Japan) said that Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, the Gambia, Georgia, Greece, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

66. *Draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.36/Rev.1 was adopted.*

67. **Mr. Kodera** (Japan) expressed appreciation for the active participation and spirit of cooperation of Member States, especially the Group of 77 and China, the European Union, the United States of America, the Russian Federation and other partners, during the informal consultations on the draft resolution. Together with the United Nations system, the University would continue to evolve in response to the rapid changes occurring in the world. To do that successfully, however, it must continue to receive strong support from Member States.

68. He hoped that the draft resolution would attract further attention to the University in United Nations forums and that Member States would take further interest in its activities. The University's New York Office had an important role to play in responding to Members States' interest in seeing issues addressed in the University as well as raising awareness about its work within the United Nations. He urged other delegations to take advantage of the many events hosted by the New York Office and to work together with the University.

Agenda item 118: Programme planning (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.50)

Draft decision on programme planning

69. **The Chairperson** introduced draft decision A/C.2/61/L.50.

70. *Draft decision A/C.2/61/L.50 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.